

# EARLY

Collection of Anonymously Written

# SPRING

Notes on the Wisconsin Feb – March 2011 Struggle

# FOR

Concerning Austerity,

# THE

Democracy, Race, Violence, Madness & Revolutionary Strategy

# BADGER



# **EARLY SPRING FOR THE BADGER**

**V2.0**

**COLLECTION OF  
ANONYMOUSLY WRITTEN  
TEXTS CONCERNING  
THE STRUGGLE IN  
WISCONSIN, AUSTERITY,  
DEMOCRACY, RACE,  
VIOLENCE, MADNESS  
& REVOLUTIONARY  
STRATEGY**

**MAY, 2011**

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# EXPOSITION

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**I**n March of 2011, new legislation was brought to the congressional table in Madison, WI; it sought to diminish collective bargaining rights for the public sector, attempting to fix a budget deficit created by the collapsing economy. Historically, Wisconsin has been a state that prides itself on such worker's rights, and the weeks following Governor Scott Walker's proposal reflected the immense rage such legislation created among Midwest workers. Demonstrations began as mass and unprecedented sick-outs by teachers and students all over the state, closing schools for days while the capitol became a gathering place of angry cheese-heads. Fueled by the recent Super Bowl victory, Wisconsinites from all over the state called out of their respective work places as celebrities such as the Green Bay Packers and Roseanne encouraged them to push forward. The media reported several taxis blocking downtown Madison traffic, while doctors wrote fake notes for demonstrators to remain away from their jobs and teachers began holding teach-ins rather than going to class. Democrats in office became a spectacle of resistance as they fled the area, hiding in hotel rooms to halt voting on the bill. With every passing day, the number of protesters grew larger and larger until the capitol was in a state of continuous occupation. Pizza was bought for demonstrators from around the world in solidarity.

Demonstrations took a peculiar turn when police officers and prison guards joined the crowd of protesters, dampening the potential conflict between participants and the state. This confused those who feel enmity with police, and excited those who do not. Tensions at this point were not all that high, but very strange. The Tea Party came to town one day; much like a middle-school dance, they stayed awkwardly on their side of the protest while democrats stayed on theirs. Or rather, the Tea Party was that kid that brought his cousin to the dance because he doesn't have any real friends. In Milwaukee, anarchist, communist and student

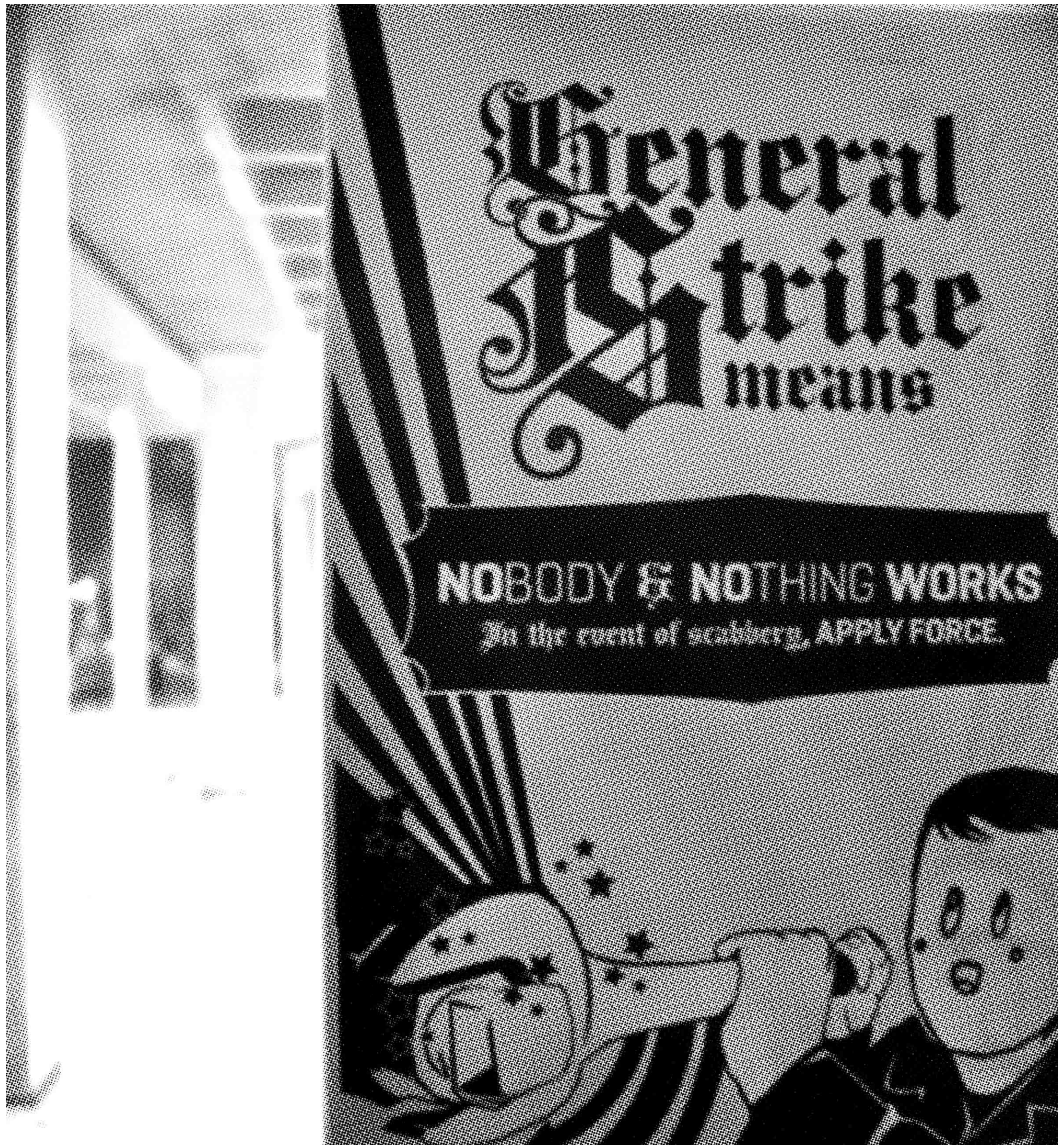
activists attempted to spread the occupation to the University; ultimately, the occupation failed to become a site of conflict. However, the space did find use as a point for local social gatherings, meetings, and was eventually mined for what ever resources were available. Someone prank called Governor Walker and released the tape on youtube; he talks about kissing his portrait of Ronald Reagan and hitting democrats with baseball bats. The climax, it seems, was the night in which the bill was passed by republicans through some tricky maneuvers that didn't require the opposition to be present. The capitol, in response, was

stormed angrily by a mass of people demanding to re-occupy it. Some people broke through police lines, the media said, and got into the building, screaming “GENERAL STRIKE!”. Once inside, chanting ensued and the energetic but redundant tone of the protests up until that point was reproduced. After this, demonstrations generally dwindled and the talk of General Strike that had been so pervasive seems to have withered away into the void of Twitter somewhere.

Elements of these protests that are being critiqued and analyzed in this text will continue to have increasing salience as austerity measures proliferate within a rotten economy. The amount of self-regulation and voluntary policing in the heart of these protests demonstrates a challenging moment in the present situation; the citizen has never looked so much like a police officer. The Left’s ability to manipulate and sterilize the desires of so many people reveals a certain impotence on the part of anarchists as agents within struggle, and the stage for failure against austerity has been successfully built based on this foundation of passive and restrained response. The question that we should be asking ourselves is not what we should have done, what others should have done, but how—when the next one comes—we will be prepared to act decisively and spread the potential of pure conflict.











**PLEASE REMEMBER:**

**THIS IS A**  
**PEACEFUL**  
**PROTEST**

# COMMUNIQUE'S AND ACTIONS

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## Look to Wisconsin

*"Look to Wisconsin; this is the beginning of the American insurrection."*

GLENN BECK, 2/17/11

As the crisis unfolds across the globe, it is more apparent than ever that the situation in Wisconsin is not unique. Scott Walker means nothing: he is simply the local face of what has become a situation of globally imposed austerity. All over the world, we can hear Scott Walkers of all shapes and sizes telling us that *this is necessary*, and that *we all need to make sacrifices*. In each instance, what's clear is the willingness of those in power to continually sacrifice our lives and well-being in the name of the survival of the capitalist mode of production.

The redemptive quality of the current situation can be found in that everywhere austerity has been imposed, the dispossessed have revolted against the economic system and state apparatuses that degrade their lives. in Greece, France, Italy, England, Tunisia, Egypt, Yemen, Iran, Bahrain, Libya, South Africa, Iraq. Street-fighting, occupations, festivals, barricades, fires, strikes. In each situation, the persistent triumph of misery over life is contested by life itself. As with the movements of capital, so too must resistance be diffuse, autonomous and international.

While the occupations and strikes in Wisconsin have not reached the intensity of the situation outside the United States, the intelligence of Glenn Beck's ravings is that this unfolding struggle in the dairy state bears the same character as corresponding anti-austerity struggles elsewhere. As more and more people's lives are rendered superfluous by the mandates of the economy, people respond in intensifying and dynamic ways to confront the flows of the economy and to stake out terrains for their own intentions. As state governments coast-to-coast lay out their hated restructuring, we can expect the exponential development and proliferation of resistance to those governments. One can almost feel the fear oozing from the figureheads and mouthpieces of capital; the fear of *the coming insurrection*.

*Wisconsin in exile, February 17*



## Sick Days Forever

Perhaps the most exciting elements of the events of today have been the wildcat strike of teachers and the massive walk-outs of students and workers. Hundreds of schools remain closed across the state as thousands of teachers and students call in sick and refuse to go to work and school. Teachers get together for drinks and to talk about the revolution, high school students spend the day in the park or march to the university to join occupations, janitors spend the day at home in bed, college kids get together to dance and gossip. Where usually our days would be spent on the ceaseless future of capital, today was ours. It almost feels like spring, and we can do with it as we please.

Put another way, we are trapped in a zero-sum game with the economy. Wherever the economy functions, it is impossible for us to determine our lives for ourselves. Any situation wherein our lives are our own would necessitate the immediate cessation or obstruction of the economy. The value of the sick day strike isn't found in the message it sends, but rather in the direct ways it blocks the machinations of capital and makes space for our own activity. We must now concern ourselves with the expansion and continuation of the joy of the sick day. Only on days like today can we even begin to imagine what a world outside capital could feel like. Let's call in sick forever!

*Wisconsin in exile, February 17*

## Warts and All: On the Occupation of University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee, March 10 (excerpt)

Because it doesn't coincide with a stoppage of work or school, because there is yet no strike, the UMW occupation forms an isolated protest. Classes, homework, and part-time jobs leave many participants exhausted. Without the appropriated time to be more invested, the situation is not qualitatively developing. We accepted the slogan of "Strike, Occupy, Takeover!" yet we've failed to collectively enact the first step in that equation. Similarly, the assembly approved a statement calling for a general strike, but without discussing how a general strike could come about. For many in the meetings, a general strike is something that will just happen not the festival of disruption produced by our collective labor. This attitude reduces the likelihood of a meaningful and widespread stoppage. Due to the nature of US laws regulating labor disputes, a general strike cannot be declared from on- high by large labor federations. A general strike must be self-organized; whether through discussion and activity at the local union level, the forging of complicit relationships at non-unionized workplaces (which are by far the majority), sabotage at non-participating workplaces, or some other form perhaps completely outside and unrepresentable by the familiar apparatuses. Other forums must be created in



which this question of how can be asked, and asked again.

The occupation is rife with limitations but it is a beginning, not an end. It expands the struggle against austerity beyond the boundaries of time (one day walkouts, weekly demonstrations), geography (the centrality of Madison), and social position (workers vs. students). It's a step, but no tiger's leap. In order to derail the legislation which sparked this uproar, the struggle must spread across even more boundaries (precarious and poor vs. securely employed, etc.) and develop both in form and content. This fight to reverse a specific attack on the working class opens general avenues for struggle. This and, the possibility of a world without legislators or classes of any sort.

## **Demonstration at Milwaukee County Jail, March 15**

"The night of March 15th, a group of roughly forty students, workers, the unemployed and other uncontrollables marched to the Milwaukee County Jail, carrying banners and black flags. The banners at the front of the march read "Burn All Prisons" and "No Control". Upon arriving at the front doors of the jail, demonstrators chanted "Free them all" and launched dozens of fireworks through the air in an effort to communicate with those locked inside.

## **University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Locks Glued, March 13**

From TMJ4 (local news)

"MILWAUKEE, The fight over Governor Scott Walker's budget is getting sticky.

Literally sticky.

TODAY'S TMJ4's Diane Pathieu confirmed that doors at Chapman, Curtin, Mellencamp, Mitchell and Sabin Halls all had doors with superglue in the locks on Monday.

She said those doors were opened before 7:30 a.m. Monday morning. No classes were affected.

Newsradio 620 WTMJ's Jodi Becker confirmed that the doors to the Sendik's on Downer Avenue were also glued shut.

UWM campus police believed it was a sign of protest, but organizers of a campus rally later Monday afternoon say they didn't have anything to do with it.

College students are angry over what the bill may mean for them, and they are making their thoughts known in protests.

They were to hold a rally on Monday afternoon in reaction to Walker's budget, which would split UWM and UW-Madison from the UW system."

The demonstration was called for by participants in the occupation of the Theatre building at UW-Milwaukee as a part of the ongoing struggle against the "Budget Repair Bill". The bill, proposed by the hated governor of Wisconsin, contains a provision that will institute a Truth-in-Sentencing policy. This measure removes the possibility for those locked away in Wisconsin's jails and prisons to qualify for early release for good behavior or 'good time'. For inmates this means a dramatic increase in the time spent in jail – more time in captivity, kept away from their families and loved ones, kept

in abject misery and isolation. The Truth-in-Sentencing provisions of the bill highlight specifically how the economic attacks on working and unemployed people throughout the state goes hand in hand with the criminalization and imprisonment of the working class). The economic system that exploits our labor, deprives our benefits, and throws us on the street is the very same system that keeps us in cages and behind barbed wire.

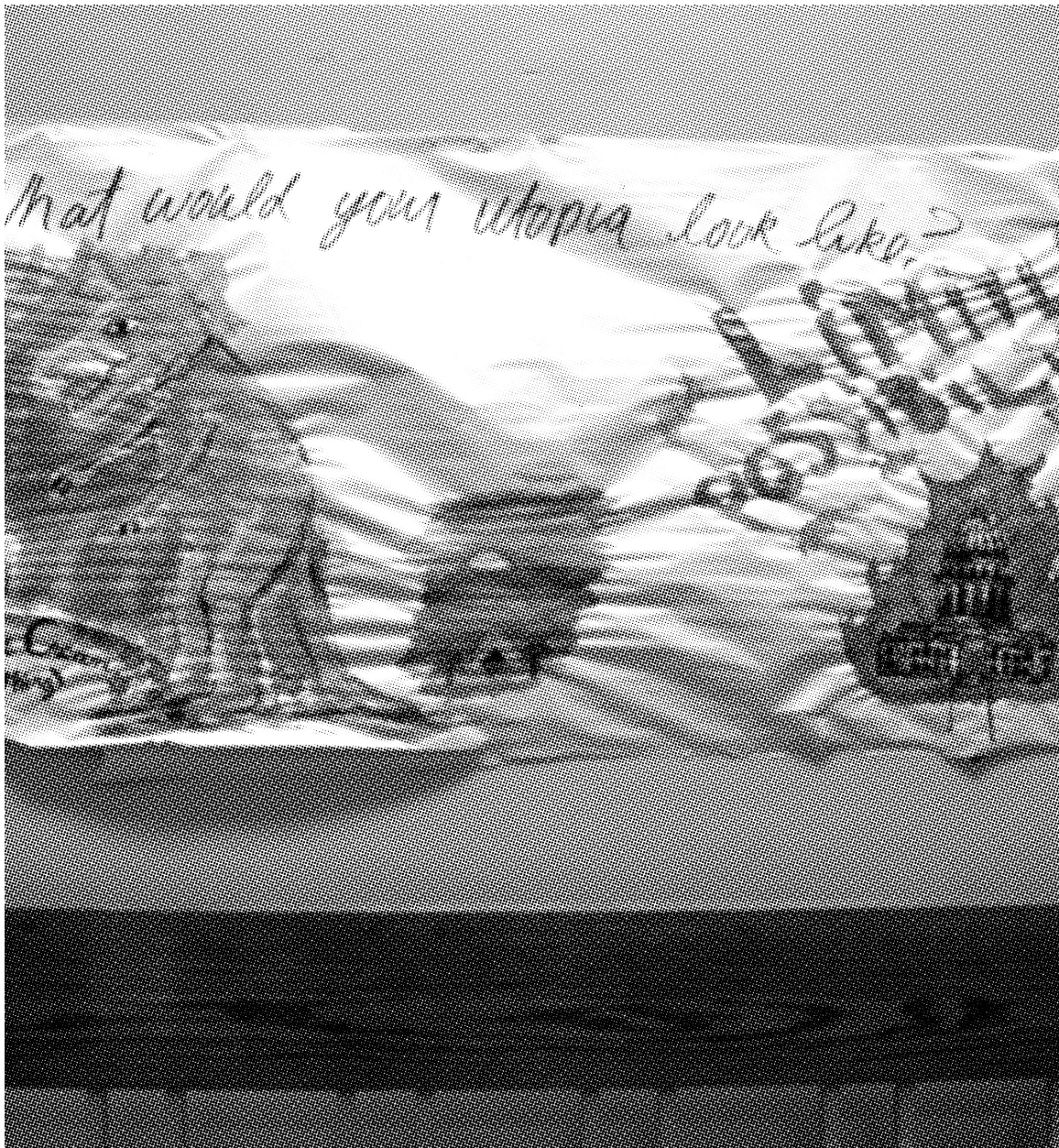
In the past weeks of resistance to Walker's austerity measures, the politicians and police unions have been remarkably silent about this provision. They've built a mythology that "we're all in this together" or that "they're on our side". It is more convenient for them to simply ignore the ways that the bill they purportedly oppose dramatically expands the prison system they faithfully defend. It's no coincidence that the bill both extends prison sentences while also protecting the Police Union from the elimination of collective bargaining rights. The role of politicians and the police is to maintain the dreadful economy and the prison system necessary to it. It should come as no surprise to us that those who fail to criticize this system are the same who encourage us to continue working and scold those who step outside the lines they've defined.

It is time for new lines to be drawn. On the one side: the governor, politicians, police, bureaucrats, professional activists. On the other: prisoners, workers, students, the unemployed, the enraged. If the spontaneous struggle against this bill were to generalize and become a movement against this economic system and its prisons, it would mean that those affected by the bill would need to extend their actions and gestures of solidarity through all the walls that separate them. December's historic strike by prisoners in Georgia shows us what such action could look like. For us, this means that the strikes, occupations and sabotage – the generalized disruption of the economy – needs to spread through the walls of the prison, to generalize, and to intensify. In this, we need to build complicit relationships and revolt inside and outside those walls.

Towards an unlimited strike, for a world without prison."

*The enraged*







# MITIGATING CIRCU MSTANCES

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“The proletariat’s assault on the citadels of capital only has a chance of success on condition that the proletarian revolutionary movement finishes with democracy once and for all. Democracy is the last refuge of all disavowals and betrayals, because it is the first hope of those who believe in purifying and re-invigorating the current movement which is rotten to its core.”

JACQUES CAMATTE, THE DEMOCRATIC MYSTIFICATION

## I.

In Wisconsin, public sector workers, students, and others more generally occupied the Capitol building to stop it from functioning. They prevented the legislative process, the transition from paper, to voting quorum, to the laws taking effect, and thus manifested a force against democracy. That this was done in the name of democracy illuminates a crisis of subjectivity within the democratic citizen. Acting as a negative force, they could not merely supersede democracy but also make their own power possible. However, something resembling a politics, a position for itself, can only come about through reappropriating violence, acting against an imposed consensus.

## II.

Angry and confused bodies filled the empty spaces of the Capitol. They trampled its lawns; they plastered its walls with tape, banners

# Democracy diverts this gaze into the game of objective enemies, thereby neutralizing the consequences of the truth at the core of any

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and posters. They banged on whatever they could, screamed and chanted until few other sounds could be heard. Police were called in to regulate the bodies. At first the police did little than fill the space themselves in bewilderment of those who were already present. However, this was never a victory for “workers solidarity.” Physical discipline was superfluous—the bodies regulated themselves. The intensive self-policing, the non-violence trainings which took place, the reality that literally anyone could perform the role of police or marshal, good worker, and good citizen, preempted the question of violence. The collective response only illustrates the obvious necessity of an intensification of conflict and its elaboration through violence.

### III.

Any rupture or large-scale manifestation of people reacting to crisis, and thereby being the crisis, will manifest at first as a movement for the return to normality—within a normality that is no longer possible. We will be trapped within the apparatuses and discourses that contain us, but also necessarily exceed these limits through an activity in conflict with these conditions. In Wisconsin, we witnessed a struggle for unions, a struggle for work, and a struggle for democracy, and yet the only path possible besides defeat would be against all the struggle explicitly affirmed—all that reproduces the relation of capital, all that reproduces the conditions of work and the subjectivity of the worker.

### IV.

Within spectacular democracy, one can possess any subjectivity, any opinion. One is encouraged to aestheticize and to creatively decorate the void that one inhabits. One can, so long as one contests nothing fundamental to *being* within the world as capital, so long as one functions to maintain, reproduce and progressively develop the conditions of the commodity, utter all sorts of transgressive opinions. To be mobilized by and drift with the flows of capital is without a doubt inescapably political, but it is incapable of elaborating a politics,

# of achieving consensus with one's nity, and preventing the extreme material politics.

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which is only possible through the contemporariness of an active critical gaze. Democracy diverts this gaze into the game of achieving consensus with one's objective enemies, thereby neutralizing enmity, and preventing the extreme material consequences of the truth at the core of any politics. Not even a general strike or burning Capitol could be enough to satiate such truth driven to its most extreme consequences.

## V.

Ill-defined—and yet far too defined—confused and angry, this force in Wisconsin prompted politicians of the left to act on their behalf or else risk total representative obsolescence. They retreated, stalling the process that would bring the legislation into effect through quorum, both in order to hide from this mob and appeal to it concurrently. It was this stalling that protracted the situation that had appeared to thousands as being on the verge of a general strike, allowing the frustrated desires of those who witnessed the non-existence of the strike to be absorbed into recall campaigns, back into the democratic process, back into the diffusion of routine and work—that waited to vote and waited to act. Those previously so filled with the necessity to act were absorbed back into an identification with a unitary and empty consensus among irreconcilable and hostile forces, more than their own power.

## VI.

Though we still work, the workers movement has been dead for quite a long time. It no longer fixes our gaze toward work any more than survival within capitalism does. Reacting to an intensification of exploitation through austerity measures, the tradition of past generations weighed like a nightmare upon those workers without a movement or history. A fleeting and collapsing dream nonetheless still attempted to be pieced together. A response was envisioned that was a mere rehearsal and parade of the form and content of the old workers movement with little acknowledgment of the changing form and content of the current conditions of capital. Forced to remember how to have power amidst

the confusion of our present, the civil rights movement, which was neutralized by its very inclusion, became part of this struggle's nightmare. Through this, the struggle became primarily concerned with the inclusion of an always-expanding list of identities and corresponding oppressions—via rights—within the representational process and juridical apparatuses of democracy. The constellation made up of those who have been more than frustrated by the inadequacy of these events must come to recognize that a study of the past demonstrates that we are not infinitely confined to an eternal present, against a particular mode of being or a particular us. We are directed by the past toward a negative and inessential nature, and the glaring impossibility of such an inclusion – toward our irreducibility. And we must remember, most of all, that our act of remembering is made possible through the process of annihilating this world.







# THE SHAPE OF NOISE TO COME

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Prologue: **HISTORY** The history of the oppressed in the US is a history of failures to avert the catastrophe of racial order: first as bloody tragedy, then as passive farce. The precondition of US industrial capitalism was slave labor, and the precondition of the trade labor movement was a racial ordering of difference. Any gain made through social struggles thus far has also been a gain made for capital and for the affirmation of the racial ordering of power. Each struggle, locked in a dialectic with *the social*, empties itself of the power to interrupt the catastrophe because the very concept of the social is paramount in founding the catastrophe of racial order. As an attempt to prevent CIVIL WAR, racialization, like policing, owes much of its logic to Hobbes. In Hobbes and other enlightenment philosophers, an imaginary boundary separates the civil state and the state of nature: Law. This boundary marks the territory of the social. The racial program positioned “non-white” forms of life outside the care of law. This is how the lives of Africa could be met with despotic rationality. However, like all juridical operations of exclusion, racial order reaches its threshold at its origin. All forms of life reside in “the state of nature,” and the ones that seek to reduce this might just be a particular form of life. Thus Hobbes’ social program was always an imperial enterprise at subjectivation, and the boundaries of the social were flexible and based solely on something exterior to a subject or form of life. The enchantment of race in the US is not mere false consciousness, in which a planter class invents an ideology which purports to materially benefit a portion of workers (white) while oppressing another portion (black). Rather the racial spell reduces every form of life, attenuates every ethical difference, and comes as part of a process of producing subjects that are governable and without *sense*. Racial order extracts every form of life from its world—and with it, *memory*. We forget both *the good life* and the horror of the past, which yearns for redemption.

**Any struggle worth citing always assaults the meaning of the social**, always reveals its taste for anarchy, and thus far, has always been brutally defeated. Like the workers who’ve forgotten both the Paris Commune and Chicago 1886, we continue to forget that our history is a history of CIVIL WAR. And all of it—EVERYTHING that conspires against us—to this day, prevails. We forget the sad self-defeat of New York 1863, the loss of the *American Commune* in which race, capital, and the state might have been abolished. And when slave insurrection and Reconstruction are invoked some hundred years later, the self-same failure is repeated. Progress—the narrative of Man’s accomplishments—marches over the past, loosely concealing the need to interrupt the catastrophe—the need for communism.

## THE MEANING OF WISCONSIN

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**S**ocial movements act today as limitations that struggles must outmaneuver or overcome. In Wisconsin, contesting the management of the social worked to neutralize a latent ferocity and render the struggle an accomplice to its own racially coded anxieties. Arguably, the only *political* act in Wisconsin was recuperation. The Wisconsin struggle, in staking a claim in the social, self-regulated the exclusion and discipline of autonomous content and forms, thereby *cutting the sinews of its greatest strength*. This process functioned simultaneously to administer racial codes and barriers that all took place in the work of government. A different politico-historical conception of race and a corresponding strategy will arm us against these measures and prepare us for the crises ahead.

It began as a break with the certainty of work. It appeared first as spontaneous marches, walkouts, diffuse wildcat strikes—popular sick-outs complete with complicit doctors’ notes—and finally an occupation of the Capitol building in Madison. At the representative level, Democratic senators fled from sight, stumbling away from their roles. Each act of insubordination revealed the murky line between law and unlawfulness—for a moment, even the senators lost their appearance as politicians and accidentally co-authored a story of resistance to austerity.

A social movement appeared in Wisconsin. Unfortunately, our conditions don’t cohere *socially*. There is no unity of language, much less practice,

and there is certainly no allegiance to what’s left of the institutions. The only unity available to us is that of capital. What should have immediately grown in intensity and frequency as an unpredictable counter-attack lined up behind the sad banner of better management of the social. It was precisely its appearance as a “social movement,” its stability and coherence, its simulacrum of civil rights, that led the Wisconsin struggle to its currently doomed path. The desire for legitimate subjectivity that governed the acts of even the most radical elements restricted the struggle’s ability to form communities and experiment with new languages. Even the anarchists could only be gagged by their image of blue overalls masses marching for the general strike. At each opportunity, they



even sang lullabies of solidarity with police, rather than the terrible anti-state howl that only the anarchist can screech. Everyday subjects collectively imagined a struggle in Wisconsin, but not once did that imagination dirty itself with others. The moment that a new sense of community could be felt, those days when thousands of anti-austerity demonstrators faced off against the little Tea Party brown shirts, was the same moment the struggle in Wisconsin retreated to old roles and identities: precisely those granting one friendship with the police, and enemies with disorder.

What happened in Wisconsin in early '11 is inspiring on many levels, but nonetheless defensive and limited. In the period of one week the image of labor struggle in Wisconsin altered public discourse to include the scandal of "class." However, in spite of the initial acts, no one who made their way to Madison, on our side of the barricades, did so in order to *act politically*. This failure is the terrain of our exploration.

Collective acts of interruption announce the coming of something else. During this moment—which, in the case of Wisconsin, stretched out for weeks—a time of *the political* is possible. Decision takes on its real power and uncertainty is revealed as potential. In the political moment, gestures that would have been empty at any other time become endowed with meaning. Decisions, ours or theirs, can have the power to smother a struggle or defend its barricades against the armed wing of progressive history. Here the struggle either grows or is added to the history of the vanquished.

Communication makes political action possible. The sense of *We*, as a collective force, is the outcome of a shared language. A struggle is composed of various languages and communities. Eventually the common negative element, not the positive, constitutes the struggle's sense of *we*, a *party*. Even the old workers movement could only be named as such in its negative relation to capital. This is why today struggles function to reveal that there are two parties, the party of order—those who work to avoid the clash, the political moment—and the party of insurrection—those who work to hasten it.

The conditions in Wisconsin, although limited by the defensive nature of the discourse against "Governor Walker's anti-union bill," were arguably more favorable than most other struggles in the US in the last decade for such a moment. Judging by one demonstration in Madison alone, more than a hundred thousand people opposed the government's austerity measures. More people opposed these measures than were at national demonstrations against the Iraq war, much less globalization. The level of spontaneous and grassroots organizing was breathtaking, enough for this nostalgic writer to forget his own cold skepticism for moment. Union halls actually had an interesting use, walls inside and around the capitol were covered in posters, and through various radical and social networking conduits, information spread quickly and appropriately both within and beyond Wisconsin. However, all of these means remained categorically separate from each other. No website, no space, no meeting point—besides the capitol—

# On the terrain of struggle, the GOP, the police, and the and their shared “political civility” campaign was the

became a common hub of the struggle. The occupation by the anarchists and students in Milwaukee became a space from which to organize, but never established itself as the convergence point of a series of actions, mostly because there was no such series of actions. Although acting decisively on March 9 to distribute general strike pamphlets, the Industrial Workers of World (IWW) failed to actually develop practical forms of self organization that corresponded to their project. There were no strike committees, no general assemblies discussing the real logistics of a generalized halt of production and reproduction. Perhaps the IWW organization was already the wrong machination for these objectives, given its small membership, lack of funds, and limited network outside itself. Nonetheless, no one was getting organized to collectively provide for themselves once everyone and everything stopped working. Who wants to participate in a myth emptied of its material content? There is no political moment without collective practices that induce collective will.

Wisconsin is significant precisely because of these limits. It could have been the first of many developments in self-organized struggles against austerity, but for the time being, the struggle against austerity is hindered by its failure to initiate such forms and Wisconsin stands as a case study in this failure. The failures of the anarchists and the IWW are the most striking because of their composition and their ability to form an active minority position or communizing current within the struggle. Given the anarchists’ ethico-political imperative against the state, they still have much to contrib-

ute to the development of self organized forms. Given the IWW’s, clear anti-capitalist position, they (or something like them) are still positioned best to establish encounters with other organs and disseminate tactical information in situations like Wisconsin, even if their own programs will be a limit to their realization. The lack of self-organized forms can’t, and won’t, be the sole responsibility of the anarchists and the IWW, but such bodies do have an historical task to fulfill in the development and refining of a struggle because of what animates both—an irreconcilable antagonism. The events in Wisconsin prove that we can’t, and shouldn’t, rely on an any phantom of the left to give these antagonisms form. Neither social bodies, nor any other so-called radical actor, materially and substantially gave form to the desire for self-organization from which the initial acts of the struggle were born. Ultimately because of this failure, the thousands of tweets of “General Strike” on March 9 didn’t have the same sway as the prodigal politicians’ return from exile. During the week or so of the occupation and demonstrations the lack of self-organization as a form quickly gave rise to management, and the self-organized content of the struggle (i.e. various rebellious practices, languages, and intimacies) were quieted by the authoritative voice of management, or excluded from participation. This is how everyone went back to work on Thursday.

Wisconsin could have been a festival of disruption collectively authored by hundreds of thousands of people, but as I’ve shown, the process of giving form to the desire for self-organization was routed.

## e unions were in accord, e icing on the cake.

The struggle was defeated politically through its own failure to engage in the political, to elaborate hostilities to the point of an intense friend/enemy distinction. The struggle was not only defeated because of its own failures in this regard, but these failures and limits are the outcome of the process that manages the composition, language, desires, demands, tactics, and imagination of a struggle. That is, the work of government. As I will reveal in the next section of this text, the work of government that includes the calculated, decentralized, distribution of subjectivities, endows racial subjects with a particular significance, and this significance has, and continues to have, catastrophic results. What can oppose this work of government from within a struggle? Because government now consists in the management of a dissolving society, and any rupture opens up the potential for new relations, the insurrectional hypothesis becomes the most sensible revolutionary wager. Given the racial implications of governance in the US, the insurrectional hypothesis also becomes the most sensible method through which to avert the racial catastrophe. While Foucault donning the black mask does not a revolution make, the police, middle class, media, and medical industry all acquire a racializing function in the US that only a *war with everything as its object* can affect.

Someone said *race is the linchpin to exploding the social order in the US*. I want to revisit this proposition in light of Wisconsin and the discourse of anti-austerity. Not to say that had there been a bunch of guilty-ass-white people trying to make the unions enunciate “privilege,” the outcome and current

trajectory of the struggle in Wisconsin would be different. There are many such people already employed by unions after their stints at Common Ground in New Orleans, or after a visit to the Bay to go through a Catalyst Project training. On the contrary, my provocation is thus: The party of capital strategically targeted Wisconsin to make a spectacle of its austerity bill because the racial representation of that public sector labor movement is a better wager than say, Chicago, for things to not get out of hand.

Wisconsin constitutes one of the most racially segregated states in the US, with Milwaukee as the number one city. The fact that the struggle against austerity took place in Madison, a “white college town” as neutralized as any other (instead of the gritty streets of Milwaukee), is no coincidence. On the terrain of struggle, the GOP, the police, and the unions were in accord, and their shared “political civility” campaign was the icing on the cake. Selling the unions legitimacy in trade for governable demonstrations kept power flowing to the proper conduits. This excluded any belligerent practices from ruining the image of the white middle class demanding that things return to normal. The spectacle of the anti-austerity struggle in Wisconsin worked to administer the framework of *who* would be predicated as a legitimate opposition to austerity measures and *how* austerity could be opposed. This process, in which the white bourgeois individual with a strong work ethic becomes the legitimate subject of opposition, and passive and legal means become the only means of opposition, is realized by writing austerity as an attack on the middle class.

# This process, which transforms self-organizing content into self-regulating subjects, played out perfectly in the Wisconsin, and the racialization of

Middle class is code for white—never mind that neither category has any substance. When “defend the middle class,” became a common slogan of the struggle, it was already entangled in the process of its own racialization. The struggle in Wisconsin was strategically represented as white. The real composition of ‘who is affected by austerity measures’ will not only be those white people who see pictures of themselves in the media, but it’s not problematic that the composition of demonstrators who are trying to learn how to fight includes people with “white” as a property. The problem is *not* the real composition of the struggle. Everyone is increasingly proletarianized, and as it grows into insurrection the struggle will call into question every “people,” and every property. The problem is the concrete limit of the *representation* of the struggle as white and the racial discourse coded into austerity.

A struggle against austerity in the US reflects the loss of faith in the ability of politicians and capitalists to manage social life and regulate the economy. In many ways, the previous contracts that ensured social peace have reached their expiration date. Like capitalists who must *imagineer* a new bubble to replace the housing market, politicians must scramble to find something resembling stability that workers will invest in. If the discourse of austerity can be written as a fight, with one side against loss of jobs and another in favor of reducing government spending, the image of compromise can successfully placate antagonisms and conceal what (and who) is already excluded. However, if the discourse of austerity is

written as a fight between an excess that has to be cut off or transformed and an increasingly limited, if not exterior, zone of work that must find ways to keep its logic the only option, then it becomes clear that self-organization is the hinge on which any future lies. From the position of the party of order, self-organization must come to mean self-management, it must be voluntary austerity; from our position it must come to mean ungovernable.

This process, which transforms self-organizing content into self-regulating subjects, played out perfectly in the Wisconsin, and the racialization of the struggle as white assisted it at every turn. If austerity was denounced on placards, it was enforced in the streets. The capitol in Madison becoming the focal point for struggle reduced the ability of many people to participate simply by locating the struggle geographically distant from the real front lines of the war. Who can make it to Madison to demonstrate when the bus lines don’t even run in your neighborhood? On the other hand, even when the struggle was animated by a more emotive sensibility, the anger was always quieted. The occupied Capitol never once forced out the police, nor did the demonstrators leave their mark with anything besides masking tape and posters. While the participation of a demographic that wasn’t only in its early 20s is inspiring, we still have to realize that an event that can ensure the safety of *the family* is no event at all. Intensity and police confrontation are frightening but should not be sufficient factors to exclude people older than 22. And every struggle worth mentioning has been composed of a diversity



# ent into self-regulating subjects, played out the struggle as white assisted it at every turn.

of ages, *in spite* of police violence. But this little white lie—the hallmark of the managers of revolt ever since the civil rights movement—was effective in Wisconsin. The discourse of privilege was mobilized in order to pacify the unruly elements. The plea to not endanger “women and children” (and sometimes “elders” are given that “innocence” status), despite dripping with patronizing overtones, never ends up actually creating a space in which restraint is demonstrated in order to communicate sensitivity to risk. On the contrary, such measures always end up reducing all sense and communicating nothing to those at-risk subjects who wish to fight. Instead struggles replicate the models of inclusion and representation practiced by democratic governments and businesses, always speaking the same wienery language, and authorized by the same white benevolence. The family-friendly demonstrations, the self-policing, the neutral relation to police and politicians, and the civility afforded to the Tea Party essentially gagged the struggles lips and tied its limbs. In accepting the terms of the politicians, media, police, and unions, the struggle in Wisconsin was *represented* as white, and geo-socially located in a white territory. This cut off a large portion of the public sector in Milwaukee, and reduced the struggle’s capacity to pose a threat to the normal flows of power. Instead of self-organized forms resonating and reverberating in other forms of self-organization against austerity, the struggle in Wisconsin imposed its own austerity measures—specifically against the excess of non-white political desire.

Both sides of authority in the US need austerity to be a white discourse. They need it be represented as a crisis for whites that only a reconfiguration of whiteness can solve. The left needs to recall the the promise of the middle class, even that of a distorted version of Martin Luther King Jr’s dream, to stake a claim and defend the borders of public sector job-security against the private sector precariousness. The right on the other hand, needs to recall the same promises—through some Davey Crockett, rugged individual shit—in order to prepare a majority of the population (who won’t be white, as it happens) to roll up its sleeves, and believe in a future only possible through competition. The left needs its demonstrations to be polite, orderly, and family-oriented in order to maintain public legitimacy and to reveal to the right that it’s willing to bargain. The right needs the same thing, but in order for the struggle to never grow into the no-mans land of a non-white, or anti-social desire—which functionally achieve a similar thing. The irony is that the falling rate of profit resulting in global economic turmoil means neither side can afford to bargain, which is why this is happening in the first place. Put bluntly, they need to recite the promises of whiteness in order to have anything resembling power over an increasingly fucked generation and previous generations that are going to lose every gain they ever had. But who’s going to fall for that trick again? Apparently, most of the activist-left. In Europe the strategic deployment of the discourse of citizenship (civil duty, etc) often takes the place of racial jargon in the US. It’s used to force struggles into passive

trajectories that end at the tombstone of compromise. Given the fact that austerity is about forced self-reductions of a population's access to wealth and services—we could say making the economy even more intertwined through us and at the same time more foreign to us—wouldn't the deployment of racial codes in order to achieve voluntary reductions and partnerships with the police also follow the same logic? How peculiar that this arrives at the same time when the racial configuration of power that functioned to reproduce white-supremacy in the US for centuries is now having internal errors. The inclusion of whites into the libidinal economy of police bullets<sup>1</sup> corresponds to the fact that the *Leave it to Beaver-ass-American dream* now consists of working in precarious service industry conditions, eternally in debt, with some horrible catastrophe as the only foreseeable future. The struggle in Wisconsin had to be managed from this viewpoint, because Greece '08 is just around the corner<sup>2</sup>.

Given the unique political history of the US, race occupies a special category of inquiry. Both classical politics and modern Marxist political-economic ideology inadequately approach the problem of racial order. Neither hypotheses can reconcile the forms of life that are captured and attenuated as racial subjects with the forms of life's inclinations to wander. Moreover neither hypothesis has thus far articulated race as an apparatus: a set of practices, bodies of knowledge, measures and techniques aimed at achieving a strategy of governance. Race must be rethought and confronted as an apparatus. No struggle will grow into generalized insur-

rection without a decisive assault on the racial apparatus. This is true in Wisconsin and for the burgeoning anti-austerity struggle in the US, as it was true for the former US anti-globalization movement, who retreated to its bedroom once its liberal identity was called into question by 9/11.

**1** Since '08, murders of whites by police bullets across the US have been higher than any other time since the depression. While there's thus far very little statistics, a news google search, reveals an upsurge in police-subtraction of whites. Brian Wilkins, a blogger on Operation Nation, compiled a list detailing white-death by police from March 09-10 counting 8 bodies eliminated. Add the white president of a UNC fraternity in North Carolina, Courtland Smith (2010), and 21 year old goth in Long Island, Anthony Digerinimo (2011) to Mix. It would be foolish to suggest this means that Obama is reversing the role of police, which is the argument of white-supremacist rhetoric. What this potentially means is that capital needs to overcome the limits of race, in order to be able to restructure the economy with a majority of value extracted from superfluous labor. Not by abolishing racial order, but by democratizing its police-operations. I could go on and on, but I think Giorgio Agamben's suggestion that Bare Life is the a priori of all subjects reveals the intelligence of this governmental operation.

**2** "Fuck 68, fight now!" marked the Greek revolt with a telling contemporary fervor. The Greek rioters rendered rebellion as both really existing and citable. The fact that the media attempted to capture what was enroute as the revolt of the "600 Euro Generation" should not go unnoticed either. While there's no doubt that it was those precarious surplus laborers who felt immediately attacked by Alexandros Grigoropoulos's death, it was also Albanian and Turkish immigrants, factory workers, farmers, students, house-wives—a slew of everyday subjectivities. In particular, Greece represented a swerve within the normal flows of struggles we've witnessed after anti-globalization. When the anti-CPE struggle emerged in France, invoking that same 600 Euro Generation, it could not communicate in a meaningful way to those in Banlieues who rioted against their conditions only a few months earlier. Instead of the blockades resonating across all French boundaries, they were limited to predictable student protagonists. Greece on the other hand, perhaps in its negativity, born from the annihilation of malfunctioning subjects, grew beyond this little container in Exarchia. For those capitalists shaking in their boots about the tremors of global economic crisis, Greece invokes a specter of inter-ethnic class struggle that doesn't even want the reforms they could lie about imposing. Given the fact that the Oscar Grant riots in Oakland came immediately afterward in Jan '09, we can tip our hat to the capitalist paranoias. However, the self-organized measures that were taken in Greece to learn practical lessons from France's mistakes are not what we might expect when we think of anti-racist organizing.

## RACIAL APPARATUS AND WHITE SUPREMACY

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**R**ace is an apparatus through which power is ordered. The term apparatus is useful because it reveals the essential juridico-politico-theological operation of managing what is separated from the whole. How the life common to all beings (zoe) becomes the life of particular beings (bios). Apparatuses categorize and catalog, transforming difference into distinction. In the regime of law, apparatuses function to take that which is excluded from the law and reintegrate it under the care of the law as unlawful. This is how a body passes from legal subject to criminal subject and still maintains its governability. Apparatuses function to produce governable subjects. White-supremacy is one way to describe the outcome of the racial apparatus in the US, both historically and presently. The operation of the racial apparatus is to create a licit racialized subject (white) and an illicit racialized subject (non-white). In this way the rituals of excess and expenditure can be performed, antagonisms can be directed into competition for recognition, and capital can rely on surplus populations from which to extract value. The racial apparatus serves ideological white-supremacists, but it functions autonomously.

US white-supremacy is a politico-theological program. It grants an imagined community of whites the moral imperative to seize North America for themselves and suppress all other forms of life, which are subjectivized racially (with an emphasis on blackness). Whereas no one would argue the police in the US aren't structurally racist, they also aren't as an institution ideologically promiscuous. They serve the concept of *the People*—which needs its inclusions/exclusions to justify itself—but ul-

timately must enforce reductions of antagonisms and protect the People's right to private property. If the police were to trade management of racial and social order for enmity with racialized subjects—if they were to admit that they were a white-party in a war of annihilation against blackness—they would abolish their own legitimate use of force, and thus smash the illusion of their legitimate authorization (of so much black death). The police care about who is criminalized, and thus

to be suspected, arrested, incarcerated, and murdered. They are a part of the racial apparatus that *reproduces* white-supremacy, but they need not be white-supremacist partisans.

Like capitalism, white-supremacy was one among many hypotheses of enlightenment-thought. Like capitalism, it was the concerted effort of a *party*. Concrete material practices overthrew and defeated other regimes of difference and brought white supremacy into fruition. Finally like capitalism, it has grown free from its hypothetical category and become *normal*. One only speaks of “the economy,” as one only speaks of “race.”

The discourse of the US anti-austerity struggle, coded in racial-terms and represented as white, is a limit to the struggle’s expansion and development. However, a *global* anti-austerity struggle has a similar character and potency as did the late anti-globalization struggle, but without the same day dreams of alternatives. The French banlieue Riots in ‘05 then Greece in ‘08, represent this particular overcoming. Strikes, occupations, and riots against austerity in the US would play an important role in figuring anti-austerity as a struggle that can really begin to attack. Because of this, capital sleeps unwell. The negativity of our times suggests that any struggle that can grow will be far more unpredictable and antagonistic than previous “social movements.” However, without the deactivation of racial apparatuses, even a racially diverse struggle in the US will be out-gunned by the armed partisans of white-supremacy and what is not subtracted will continue to be forcibly included into the global multi-cultural petty bourgeoisie.

# STRATEGIC AND TACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE DEACTIVATION OF RACIAL APPARATUSES IN THE ART OF INSURRECTION

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Concepts of anti-racism are themselves increasingly captured by the racial apparatus, but dripping with contradictions. Humanistic strategies can be seen at work with the inclusion of a blackness without content (i.e. blackness stripped of history) into the global multi-cultural petty bourgeoisie. However, the prisons industry still functions as a renaissance in slavery. On the other hand, a discourse of privilege, born out of the struggles of the '60s proliferates to the point of normality—complete with reference points on television sitcoms<sup>1</sup>—but the trainings on white privilege never once articulate the armed antagonism of which it originates. Nor does the privilege discourse account for how the condition of places in the economy that were once coded-non-white, and female are becoming indiscernible from other places in the economy—care, desiring, and other affective labor. All these strategies essentially reduce, conceal, and quiet the intensities of forms of life, rather than mark wayward points for escape. A tenable concept of race in the US, must necessarily take this into consideration and exploit the fractures where various miseries meet.

The weakness of counter-attack in the US is in many ways the poverty of both a politico-historical conception of the racial apparatus and lack of sensitivity to the details of how this apparatus conjoins with others in the work of government. Because the function of apparatuses is to produce subjects, and subjects are predicated juridically by law, any anti-racism or attack on racial the apparatus will take the form of an assault on governance (more so than the character of tra-

<sup>1</sup> Tina Fey as Liz Lemon on 30 Rock never misses the opportunity to make ironic reference to her white privilege and white guilt. Some would argue that she, and Dave Chapelle work to undermine racialization by exposing it as absurd and neutralizing its intensities, but I think it just made more bloggers work for the Obama campaign and assume a post-race position that fits nicely with the desire of global multi-cultural petty bourgeoisie

# Race war is the unspeakable scandal of black rage, b unspeakable scandal of forms of life?

ditional class-struggle). The failure of the '60s-'70s anti-racist discourses (e.g. revolutionary anti-imperialism) and their current trajectory as "whiteness studies" corresponds to this. Whereas, they can argue in broadest sense, that the white worker has more material interests in common with the black or brown worker than those who own the means of production, there is no specific understanding of the processes governing those interests. It might be easy enough to say those dudes are just a bunch of leftists who don't understand that communism is contingent on the proletariat abolishing itself as a class, but that still misses the mark, and doesn't reveal how the spread of anarchy<sup>2</sup> corresponds to a deactivation of apparatuses. There is an economy at work in the production of racialized subjects, but there is no reconciliation through the channels of economic subjectivity (liberal or revolutionary), because racialized subjects, at their core, are animated by desires for a world without work and without predicates.

<sup>4</sup> *Theorie Communiste* might have said "the movement of riots" in referring to the '08 Greek revolt in their essay *The Glass Floor*

The old hypothesis: Race Traitor. Race is socially constructed, therefore it can be socially deconstructed. Because the signifier of privilege is white skin, a significant portion of the white working class could act in such a way that confused the flows of privilege. In the '60s and '70s this meant joining with national liberation movements in armed struggle against the state. In many ways David Gilbert, a white combatant of the Weather Underground and Revolutionary Armed Task Force of the Black Liberation Army stands as the best example of this strategy. As the story goes during a Federal Bank truck hold-up, there is a shoot out. Most of his comrades—who are black—are killed, and he is shot, captured, and given 2 life sentences for the murder of an armed guard—of which he is still serving. Suffice to say that even in the tumultuous '60s and '70s, no more than a few dozen whites ended up picking up the gun in the US in order to join with vanguardist Marxist-Leninist organizations to have an adventure in refusing privilege. Nonetheless, even those who did, did so out of a deep moral guilt, rather than ethico-political penchant—much less out of class interests. The operation of the white race-traitor can only refuse white-privilege; it cannot on its own deactivate the racial apparatus. Failing to understand how the machinations of Spectacle cooperate with racialization, the race-traitor strategy is doomed to merely produce a wounded white subject—a scandal, certainly, but not a rupture. David Gilbert, in being indistinguishable from the black bodies opening fire, loses his white-privilege and his body becomes a magnet for police bullets, however the moment his body is desecrated, the first part

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of the sacrament is complete, and the processes of resubjection in which a white modified by his radicalness is put before the judgment of the law can be carried through. Gilbert's comrades, on the other hand, are simply erased.

New developments: capitalism is causing a crisis in racial order. Racial codes and symbols will have to be reconfigured. The violence that fetishized the black body for centuries is becoming promiscuous. Like the unsaid demand of labor in the anti-globalization movement for protectionism, resistance to austerity will come from racial anxieties. Whites are terrified of inhabiting a condition of precariousness that was previously reserved for black and immigrant labor. Right-wing grassroots organizations, like the Tea Party and Minute Men, exploit these anxieties to form a citizenist counter-insurgent force that can act metaphorically and literally as capital's shock troops. Leftist grassroots organizations, like those that shifted discontent into the Obama campaign, form a citizenist counter-insurgent force that exhaust and bore struggle by directing it through the maze of contemporary politics. Both have the same call to arms: "Society must be defended!" On the other hand, the generation aged 35 and below already experience some of the shifts concretely. Already for many of them, the promises of whiteness as echoed by middle-class myths, have already been undermined. This has happened both because the strange flows of the economy have abandoned many college graduates to stand behind bars, take orders, and ask polite questions, and because liberal progressivism has forced the black body into its awkward diverse photo-op. The gang mentality that offered non-

white youth meaningful employment/survival will likely spread across racial boundaries. The isolated violence of school shooters is the outcome of those already futureless youth who have not yet figured out how to form gangs—but its intensity will not be reduced once they do. Given the fact that all employment will become more precarious, white marginally employed, unemployed, and service sector workers will grow, and might begin to form a larger portion of the prison population. Anti-austerity struggle will be an uncertain discourse until these dynamics are worked out. But this uncertainty is precisely what is advantageous. If we can work to overcome the limits placed on us by racial apparatuses, an anti-austerity struggle can form the kernel from which ungovernable forms of life proliferate, encounter each other, and act as a party against capital and the state.

Like the race-traitor strategy, we constitute an active minority. However, unlike them, we should have no illusions of vanguards or humanism. Their previous configuration of racial antagonisms as black vs white has its residue in today's racial apparatus, but the ideology of white-supremacy vs anti-racism is impotent in the face of imperial operations of capital to overcome race as limit to its expansion and race as an antagonism that interrupts the free flow of capital. Without drawing lines we cannot defend, we must intensify the antagonisms of race strategically. Race war is the unspeakable scandal of black rage, but what is the unspeakable scandal of forms of life?



# Practically, when we encounter a form of life organized by racial barriers, when an ambush of the police is released, when a robbed bank is distributed collectively...then we can

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As an active minority we can have agency from within a struggle. We can set the tone for how a struggle announces itself, and what tactics and operations are sensible. This art is performed through experimenting with resonance. As mentioned before, the police are the living acts of apparatuses; in the US the police play a particular role in racial subjectivation. Any attack against the police reveals their inability to govern and helps to undermine their legitimacy. Because of their role in managing all subjects, police are a strategic *absolute enemy*. The point however is not to simply cause the police harm, or declare them illegitimate, the gesture must be an attempt to communicate and reverberate existing hostilities. From within the anti-austerity struggle we should be the flash of lightning that adds paranoid sweat to the police slumber, and to others, that which illuminates the night. others.. Either as a gang, or as a party, depending on how many of us can join up, we should anonymously realize the anti-police pole.

In Jan '11 in Milwaukee around 100 youth, mostly black, organized a flash mob and ran riot through the Mayfair Mall. The theoretical role of the active minority should be to articulate how this and events like it relate to the struggle against austerity. For example how black youth, the preferred feast of the prison monstrosity, are refusing to be excluded from racially coded spaces (either by curfew or by geographic barriers) and are using social technologies, to demand nothing intelligible to power, but attack these social spaces. Which is

to say, they are refusing to go along with the plan that cuts them out of the happiness preserved for others, and instead are finding different ways to be happy.

In Madison, an active minority could have organized an unruly contingent or called for an autonomous march. It could have made nocturnal attacks on Republican headquarters and developed the tactical sensibility of the struggle. The students that walked out from Rufus King High School and angrily marched for hours more than likely would not be scandalized by such developments. Had elements of the walkouts at the University of Wisconsin (in Madison and Milwaukee) had the strategic foresight, they could have elaborated the antagonisms present by simply having the material capacity (e.g. a mobile sound-system) to transform the pious marches into a disruptive festival, that for whatever reason, tend towards conflict with the police. The next place anti-austerity rears its head we must be prepared to act decisively. However, the total project of deactivating racial apparatuses will not be completed in an instant. Anti-austerity has to come to connote anti-police.

This work is done by developing an anonymous anti-police presence. We must hone in on present tensions, and historical tragedies that pave the architecture of every city. We must practically remember and invoke the ghosts whose labor and deaths are between each brick. Every city has its pogrom, and most don't tend to hide it too much. Our task will be to reveal the everyday function of



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 begin to say we're fighting racism.

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the police in the city as camp. Establish territories in the city as communes that feel themselves increasingly exterior and foreign to police orders. The Exarchia neighborhood in Greece and Kreuzberg Berlin in Germany are good examples. Riots against police have become the disposition of their inhabitants. The disposition against the police made the Greece '08 revolt an overcoming of the limits (the student-immigrant divide) that were presented by the previous round of struggles. It's possible a riot in Madison would have ended in a mess, and never spread to Milwaukee, or Green Bay but even if this had been the case there would be no question that some people *also* don't want the promise of liberal society. And this would have been a step in undermining the racial apparatuses at work in austerity.

Racial order will not be collapsed simply by riots, but *the riot is how the city speaks*. The trick of racial apparatuses at work in the city is to imply that the language of those subjectivized racially is incommensurable. The ontological, historical, and social difference of white and non-white bodies is to appear an impasse outside the universal language of capital. Racialized subjects have not shared a common form of life outside of the forms predicated on capital (music, youth subculture, and anti-capitalism). The negative element, the so-called "anti-social", possesses the greatest possibility of communication. Practically, when we encounter a form of life organized through friendship, when we share a common need for anonymity, looting, improvised activity, when we co-operate across racial barriers,

when an ambush of the police is reinforced, when the wealth of a mugged yuppie or a robbed bank is distributed collectively, when we share the space to talk intimately with each other, then we can begin to say we're fighting racism. But all of this is contingent on attempting to communicate.

Like every struggle before it, the struggle against austerity will grow into an insurrection against the present state of things or it will fade into a reference point for what the next struggle will have to remember and redeem. The global crisis presents the US with a unique possibility. Unlike the previous cycle of struggles from the '90s to the early '00s, anti-austerity takes place in a environment of extreme social dissolution and disillusionment. The racial catastrophe, which every struggle up till now has failed to avert, still faces us and conjures the image of the camps. On the other side of anti-austerity an armed counter-insurgent force hovers. But, at its fold there lies some something else: redemption. The crisis in racial order will not be completed by a refusal of its privileges, race will brought to its threshold by a letting go, a falling into the forms of life masked by racial subjectivity. This operation will be achieved as it is always achieved through going with the struggle, following its line of power and raising CIVIL WAR to its highest forms. Today, we say: we won't pay for their crisis, we won't invest in this society. We want something else, and we need the freedom to experiment with what that might be, but first EVERYTHING—especially the ways we are predicated as citizens, as workers, as subjects, as a governable body—must come to halt.

## Appendix:

# CIVIL WAR

CIVIL WAR abolishes the condition of social peace. It reveals the paradox of sovereignty. It liberates the *contingencies* of a population's governability and replaces them with the *possibilities* of a free play between forms of life. Consequently CIVIL WAR is what that dick-beard Hobbes was attempting to prevent with his theory of sovereignty and the modern State. CIVIL WAR is also objectively what was realized by the War of Religions in Europe in the 1540s that only ended with suppression of all the sects by the modern State. CIVIL WAR is governmental apparatuses' maximum antagonism.

Slavery was abolished by CIVIL WAR, not by its historical victors (the union army of the North). The famed Emancipation Proclamation amounted to kind words, as are often given by politicians. The self-organization of slaves in 1863 amounted to a diffuse *general strike*.

Elaborated by the armed hostilities of the Party of northern capital, the underground railroad, insurrectional murders, and plantation revolts, a Hobbesian nightmare spread across the southern Confederacy, quickly making its territories ungovernable, and shattering social order. Following the surrender of Robert E. Lee, the radical wing of the Republican Party imposed a series of policies on the South which came to be known as the period of Reconstruction. What followed was in many ways the recuperation of the intensity of antagonism that gave birth to the civil war and the self-suppression of autonomous practices that made the Confederacy fall. Sojourner Truth Organization argues that by 1871 in South Carolina, a virtual "dictatorship of the proletariat" convened to write a new state constitution. Half former slaves, the other half so poor that they paid no taxes. Considering the legislation passed by these officials—child labor laws, free public education, women's property rights, credit structures to enable the poor to obtain land—it wouldn't have been a far push that a struggle could have emerged that called property itself into question. However, nothing of the sort happened. STO argue that this was a fundamental failure on the part of the white Left and the union movement,

So it was that New York in 1871 witnessed a march of 20,000, demonstrating solidarity with the workers of Paris. 20,000 radicals who were able to take across the ocean to the Paris Commune but were unable to look five hundred miles to the South to the South Carolina commune! (Introduction to the US, Sojourner Truth Organization)

Trapped in the web of bureaucracy, and confronted by the Klu Klux Klan and militant white-supremacist organizing, Reconstruction efforts were soon called off, Northern troops were called back (and redeployed against railroad workers in 1877), and had it not been for W.E.B. DuBois, the so-called South Carolina Commune would have been erased from history.

Whereas the official line of Ignatiev and the anti-racist Left would have us believe the decisive moment was in 1871, I can't help but see the failure already taking place through the programmatic seizure of power. Which is to say the catastrophe, in which a new racial apparatus is born and legal white-supremacy is re-

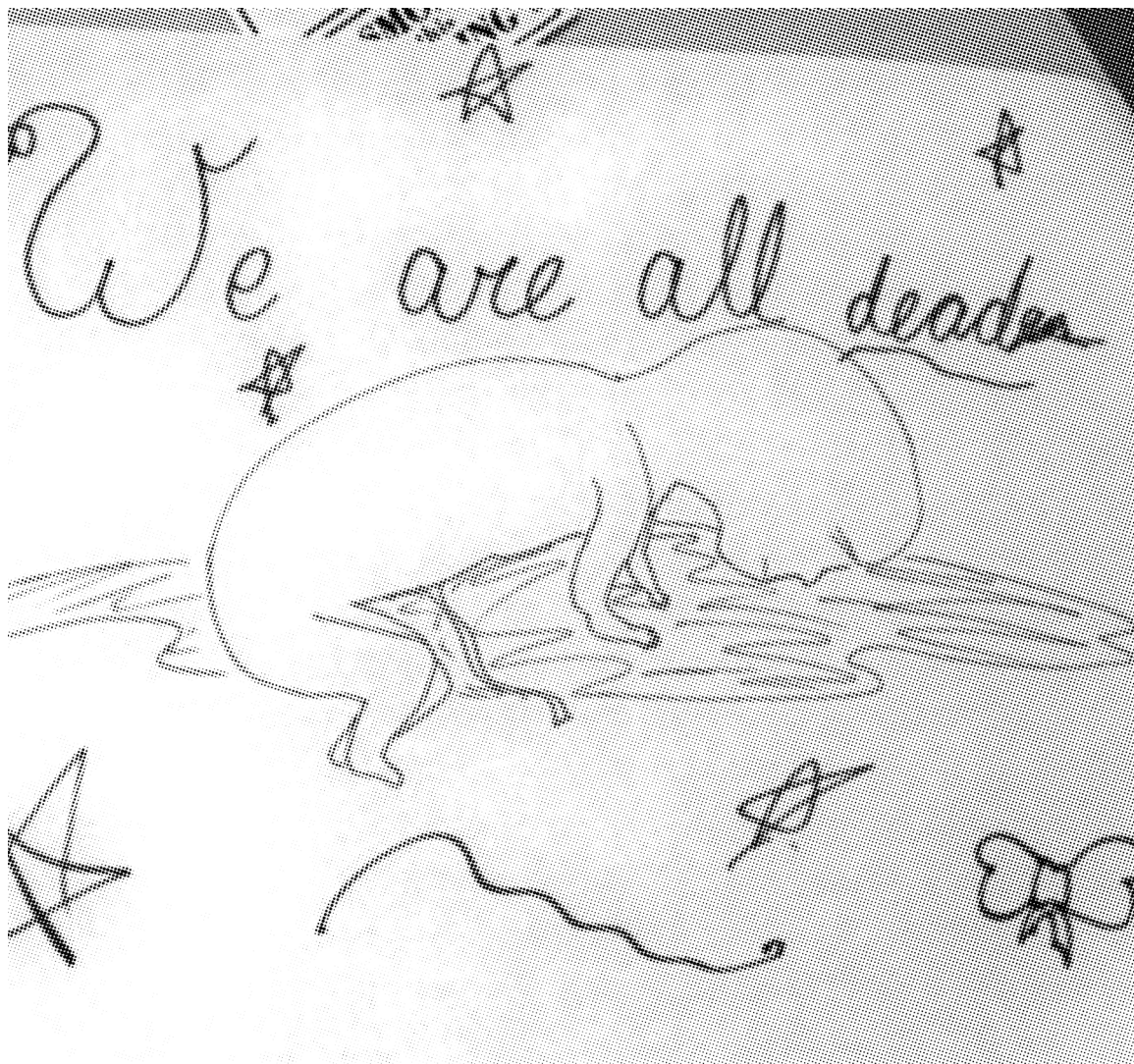
configured, is the moment the self-organization of slaves and former-slaves is reduced to an ordered hierarchy under the rule of the Party of northern capital.

This is for two reasons. First, the figure of civil war as insurrection never took on its essential *political* character; the content that made it up was directed toward existing democratic forms subordinated to law and norm, when its content was almost wholly anti-democratic—especially in the south. Struggles that enunciate the grammar of the State (e.g. Law), already dig their own mass-grave, and had white proletarians in the north saw their desire for social equality in that of former slaves, the history books would have been drastically different, but the ultimate racial outcome would have prevailed, because blackness in 1871 as today, is figured outside of enlightenment concepts of the social and Marxist progressive concepts of history and revolutionary subjectivity. Marxist political-economy, and pre-marxist leftism in the US fail to arrive at a theory capable of undermining the force of subjectivation. Economic thought could only position white workers in the US antagonistic to the potential of former-slaves and abolition, and even with a more ambitious strategy of workerism (the self-valorisation of the working class), the proletarian operation (abolishing class society) is limited to be defined by those operations of government that made “worker” a subject valuable enough to exploit—unlike the “slave” who could be erased for pleasure. Through this strategy the former slave could not be approached as a potential comrade in the war against capital—a partisan or similar form of life—only as a competition.

On the other hand, Had white proletarians, refused the economism of their leaders, had the 1863 Draft Riots been directed at white workers condition as proletarians, culminating in occupations of territory and expropriation of wealth, a rupture with racial order could have been precipitated by 1871 because the means with which to speak against capital and the

state would have been established. The Maroon Commune, communities of the indigenous and escaped slaves, offer the most provocative example for how race antagonisms in 1863 could have been rethought. Obviously still missing the mark, northern white labor never encountered the Seminole or other Maroon communes as comrades, but Maroon communities offered a swerve in 19th century politics. Had it been possible for white workers, through their own unique Blanquism—if propaganda of the deed and the barricades via radical abolitionism had emerged within the US workers movement in the 19th century—to locate dispositions to resist their subjectivation, their condition as workers, a tigers leap outside the confines of liberal politics might have been possible. And by 1865 a different CIVIL WAR might have come into play between the capitalist form of life and the communist. Only communes could abolish the *property* of race. Second, the catastrophic moment was the result of an ontological failure to abolish race. The legal subject of a black-citizen (an African American) provokes a crisis in the previous racial order, but it does not complete the abolition of race as category or a property. On the contrary, the subjectivation of black bodies as citizens produces a paradox in the racial order of power—because the race apparatus must have licit and illicit users—and an ontological impasse for blackness. If to be black, even after the war, means a referent to slavery and capture (and reduction of a previous form of life), then there is no program, even if power is seized, that can liberate the black body from ontological terror of blackness. In a word, the apparatus that subjectivizes the black body—the racial apparatus that attaches itself to police, to medicine, to the state, to publicity, to academia, to entertainment—all must be rendered inoperable. Without the destruction of the world that produced the condition of blackness as slave, and the world that reproduces the condition of blackness as excess, there is no emancipation from slavery. Not in 1863, not in 2011.





# THOUGHTS ON THE APPARA TUS OF VIO LENCE, AND SOME MISUSES OF FOUCAULT

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“It is no longer the end of time and of the world which will show retrospectively that men were mad not to have been prepared for them; it is the tide of madness, its secret invasion, that shows that the world is near its final catastrophe; it is man’s insanity that invokes and makes necessary the world’s end.”

MICHEL FOUCAULT, MADNESS AND CIVILIZATION

## I.

**One could engage wholeheartedly** in the semantical battle between violence and non-violence, using rational and historical facts to create an argument for “either side”, and never discover that their efforts are being swept along in a cyclone of empty language. Tempting as it may be to describe the ways in which the arena of violence is divided along the lines of power, this observation does nothing to dissolve



# The subjectivities of "violent" and "peaceful" forms-of-life that cannot be identified and inc

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the toxic affect of a generalized discourse grounded in such an ambiguous entity. When a conceptual specter such as violence, or its supposed antithesis, is given the illusion of life—through both language and practice—it is then capable of absorbing all hints of spirit from the lips of those who utter its name upon sight of an escalating situation.

A. Allow recent protests in Wisconsin to act as an example and template of recent events in which the articulation of tactical and ideological boundaries based on the topic of violence resulted in a mass of circling and impotent bodies. It is no coincidence that many participants in Madison preemptively declared the anti-austerity struggle to be of a non-violent nature before there was any evidence of a more brutal uprising coming into focus. Not only was this gesture extremely effective at reframing the potential conflict into a matter of either being *with* the popular and passive sentiment of anger, or *against* democracy and therefore anti-social; it was also disturbingly consumed by anarchists who believed that they had nothing at stake in such a popular uprising. Many anarchists also acted preemptively in dismissing the events; according to those tuned in from around the country, such protests from the onset were too liberal, too union-oriented and ultimately disempowering. Despite the presence of spontaneously diffuse and peculiar measures taken by workers and students across the state against legislation, this declaration of positioning relative to violence meant that everyone involved started from a point of restraint and weakness.

## II.

For both members and outlaws of society, the overwhelming need to rationalize one's presence within an environment fastens itself onto every decisive moment. The categorical impositions of what gestures *are*—what they represent and describe—cling desperately to each experience of revolt in a most debilitating manner. In attempting to articulate the determining factors of exactly what constitutes violence, and deciding to have a particular relationship with it as opposed to another, one fails to see that their gaze has been averted from the object of their anger, and towards a circular debate and obsession with tactical ideologies.

# must dissolve into amorphous incorporated into the spectacle of unrest.

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A. No one should have been surprised at the Left's overwhelming grip on the Wisconsin protests, nor the willingness of so many citizens to attach themselves to its image of peaceful, middle-class discontent. This predictable element of struggle does not, in any way, cancel out the magic found in thousands of people abruptly leaving their jobs, coming together, and sharing a sense of distrust towards the government; giving the Left this power to dissuade a more unruly participation from taking place is indicative of a certain gullible nature within the anarchist milieu. A position situated within the dichotomy that the left creates will always be one reactionary in nature and powerless in action.

## III.

Defeating the passive rhetoric deployed to neutralize struggles does not consist of winning an argument about whether this or that is non-violent, or whether violent means justify moral ends. Rather, the structure in which this discourse takes place must be dismantled, in order to eliminate the very distinctions which keep discontent isolated and categorized. The subjectivities of "violent" and "peaceful" must dissolve into amorphous forms-of-life that cannot be identified and incorporated into the spectacle of unrest. The violence that state apparatuses fear most is not merely a popular attack on one of their limbs, but rather a generalized madness that knows no reason and cannot be calmed or pacified.

A. Everyone thinks too damn much. If only this, then that; if we had more of us, they would join; if we could subtract that leader, people would stop following. Bullshit. There is no "us" and "them"; we all love the Packers, we all hate imposed austerity measures and thought the revolt in Egypt was amazing. Okay so maybe things aren't that simple, but the point is our defined and specific identities in relation to popular struggle don't do anything but separate our desires into spheres that are more manageable to the state and capitalism. No one cares about the anarchist critique, our task is not to explain our position. Our role must be only to expose the hysteria we feel when some assholes try to once again take more, and this frenzy cannot be translated through language or analysis. By dismissing the commonalities between one form of unrest and another,

# The entire world watched as one man's act of and a wave of irreconcilable rage spread by w

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based on the different ways it is expressed, we are walking directly into the path of subjectivization and clearing the way for disaffection's recuperation.

b. One text distributed in Madison, while attempting to echo the sentiment of anti-austerity demonstrations, made a request to participants: "Never Go Back to Work. Never Go Back to School". While this statement is something that certainly resonates with the sick-outs and whispers of general strikes, there is an underlying tone within it that separates the author from readers in a way that reifies the distinctions between us—the anarchists or whatever we are—and all other demonstrators. Rather than making a proposition that includes our own gestures within the larger mass of people, such as "I'll call out sick again if you do" or "I am never going back to work, we will not go back to school", this request implies that we do not expect others to remain as invested in this endeavor as we are. We are telling them the appropriate thing to do, and despite how cool that suggestion is, it is coming from a place of supposed authority on the matter. Perhaps the content, the form, the tone of our texts really does not matter in any way; maybe no one reads or cares about them, but if that is the case then we at least ought to ask ourselves *why*. Why would no one care to listen to us when they, too, are thoroughly disillusioned and angered by the structures that constitute our daily lives? It could be that the words we utter reek of a condensing ideology that cannot hide from itself, that does not allow itself to transcend beyond the limits of its own conceptual skin.

## IV.

"Everything has been carefully parameterized so that  
NOTHING EVER HAPPENS."

Popular uprisings, like all other facets of civilized life, are dissected and separated according to sets of criteria that are essentially meaningless and often fatal. Individuals are encouraged to define themselves within resistance as the image of either the callous rioter or peaceful, but indignant, citizen; of course there are plenty of other options, but let us work with this most abundant dichotomy. Having set up a system of boundaries and traditions to draw from, both have limited what they

# desperation hit a nerve-ending...

## way of insurrection.

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consider appropriate and effective practices: the pacifist speaks like a broken record of Gandhi into a microphone before thousands of people, while the black bloc interrupts their speeches with the sound of shattering glass. Eventually everyone goes home and the remnants are swept away; later the scene is relived as people watch the footage on youtube, either feeling disempowered or the weight of nostalgia sink in their stomachs at the thought of it being over. This cycle repeats itself in nearly every situation until something new and incomprehensible happens, something more spectacular than a massive street presence or brief riotous rampage.

A. Let us take a step to the side for a moment. Not long before protests started in Wisconsin, countless other parts of the world were set ablaze with revolt due to the increasing financial crisis that the global economy has created. One of the most overwhelming and undeniably moving examples took place in Tunisia, in December of 2010. A story that everyone knows by heart now, Mohamed Bouazizi has his unpermitted fruit and vegetable cart taken away by authorities; it is his only means of providing for his family and his pleas to keep it are dismissed; he is slapped in public by authorities and left without a way of survival. In the public square, Mohamed douses himself in gasoline and proceeds to set himself on fire in response to the poverty that has been forced upon him and his family. This act of self-immolation directly leads to uprisings all over the country, and countless other suicides are done to protest conditions. The entire world watched as one man's act of desperation hit a nerve-ending on an entire population of people being robbed by those in power, and a wave of irreconcilable rage spread by way of insurrection. This was simply one gesture in a constellation of mutiny that has blossomed around the world in the past year in powerful and undeniable reverberations.

### V.

When the blanketing madness of this environment is translated into something that nearly anyone can see, hear, conceive of or feel, the foundation of our shared existence is left exposed and vulnerable. A collective sense of losing touch with reality makes anything seem possible,

and for a brief moment all desires can be fulfilled in the most diabolical sense. But the moment is always brief, flitting by without leaving a return address; nobody knows when it will happen again and no one knows how to make it stay. By the time its audience has chosen sides, the opening is gone; sanity restored.

A. The contemporary situation is catastrophe. Any response that does not somehow reflect the intensifying derangement of our surroundings will ultimately remain incapable of resonating beyond itself. This is perhaps why a reasonable (catalogued) approach to austerity measures is so easily stifled and quieted. There is nothing rational about the decaying grip of capitalism on our lives, and therefore a rational reaction is inappropriate. Our situation is one of intensely disorienting isolation, and there is no way to tell how it can be dissolved. But clearly there was no restraint when a man set himself on fire; it was utter madness, a direct cause of shared and wretched conditions that unleashed a similar—but collective—calamity.

B. An air of wild potential, republicans have passed legislation in a most sneaky and illegitimate manner; thousands of people storm the capitol building in Madison demanding entrance. News sources say that when they are turned away, the mass of bodies use whatever force they can to get in. The capitol soon fills with an electricity that North America has not seen in years, and possibility speaks to those tuned in from around the world. But finding themselves together, sharing something ungraspable and unimagined, there is no collective memory among protesters of *what to do* with each other. The situation begs to be filled with utter insanity, a bodily reaction that cannot be identified as militant or passive, but simply out-of-control and irreconcilable with its surroundings. A destruction that needn't be defined by estimated damage done but by how many ears are pierced by a screaming phantom echoing across the corridor of the stupid fucking capitol, a dissonant song of mourning not for the loss of collective bargaining but for the loss of life outside of this devastatingly morose society; a destruction that knows no name, no boundaries, and has no face or home to the media. But instead there were signs hung with blue tape, continuous chanting and eager anarchists waiting to hear of something more exciting; finally days of waiting passed and the demonstrations grew smaller



and smaller. There was sterile hindsight before the event had even begun, and a general lack of neurosis kept everyone on their best and most ineffectual behavior. The sad aftermath is a sea of individuals still captured by the apparatus of violence and its counterpart, too captivated by their identities to break loose and let craziness take place.

*“And now what do we do? And now what do we do? We must do something, I want to do something, it isn’t true that we are powerless before the monsters. The angels of death, the gray, the obtuse, the dangerous, I cannot keep quiet much longer. Either the prison must explode or my head must explode. Radio Alice is quiet, the comrades are quiet, they invent words, the habitual masks. They don’t speak and they don’t even have ideas. Lethargy. We are already creating the little ghetto: we are or we are not wild cats running through the town. Let’s not give free reign to our jailers, strike the tiger’s heart every day, in every way, according to our differences, against the sadness and the solitude of cells of confinement, twenty-four hours of air. This is an invisible invitation to speak and to think, and invitation to be always present in the situations in the towns in the neighborhoods the schools the barracks the factories the roads, let’s exhaust the enemy, let’s wear out the giant monster by beating it all over its body. Let’s not talk about desires anymore, let’s desire: we are desiring machines, machines of war.”*

## VI.

“Things themselves become so burdened with attributes, signs, allusions that they finally lose their own form. And dreams, madness, the unreasonable can also slip into this excess of meaning. The symbolic figures easily become nightmare silhouettes.” M. Foucault

Potential is only beautiful until it has been named. The more a hand reaches for something, the more it tries to clutch and hold it close to a particular image, the faster this object of desire slips away. To fully interrupt the progress of this storm—to make the war stay—it mustn't be burdened with the clutter of inconsolable political identities grasping to hold it near their breast. The meaning that is injected into every movement a body makes, into every thought and inclination one may have, must be deconstructed in such a way as to escape capture and recuperation into civil discourse. This is only possible when the subjectivity of oneself, the role that is played within the environment of struggle and elsewhere, is left behind and abandoned for the winds of mutiny.

A. The language of civility is one that we would rather not speak. It is a coldness that we are forced to know but cannot swallow. There is no outside of this terrain that condemns us to misery, no use in pretending to comprehend or dismantle it. *"The end has no value as passage and promise; it is the advent of a night in which the world's old reason is engulfed. In this extravaganza, the theater develops its truth, which is illusion. Which is, in the strict sense, madness."* Let's fill the situation with our condemned souls and nightmare silhouettes, until truth reveals itself. Every molecule carries the scent of delirium.

## VII.

A crack in time and space, the moment when revolt appears as the only logical thing to do. Salvation lies dormant until just this second, lingering for the blink of an eye before fluttering back to the darkness of empty silence. What an insurmountable task, to render ourselves available for its use; what an utterly impossible undertaking that we must attempt for the entirety of our lives. But we must.

## VIII.

The myth of modern reason must be abolished. Every relationship to our surroundings must be torn apart by the seams and left open for de-

mentia to breathe. Calm and collected no more; hearts beat scattered, irregular, across a world being led towards decimation. Violence as a star, a glimmer of light that is carried to us through vast darkness. If we could be with it, it would burn us; consume and deteriorate every speck of life we have come to know. Agonizing and immutable, irreducibly life and death. A force that erodes the ground beneath our feet, sends a crack to the other side of the world and speaks of desperation to those we cannot touch. Profound violence that does not show up on film but travels through the air like a wave of light or sound. A ringing in ears, saturated color, bass reverberating into the marrow of our bones. Violence not as means nor ends, just nor unjust, but simply as *sentience*.

*“By a strange paradox, what is born from the strangest delirium was already hidden, like a secret, like an inaccessible truth, in the bowels of the earth.”*





# DECENTER THE STRIKE

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## Make It Spread

Politicians, activists and sensational journalists will continually act to draw all attention to the symbolic center of political activity. All eyes will be on the capitol. While the space of the capitol building itself creates an interesting zone of inoperativity—a space for play and experimentation—the space itself functions as the primary limit to the elaboration of such play. Certain enthusiastic radicals will point to the exciting ways in which people act to create new relationships within the space. Such optimism misses the multifold way in which the constraint of such activity to the space severs such activity from any potential. Firstly, the presence of workers and student in the capitol building marks their absence from buildings and channels that comprise the material basis and flows of capital. Put another way, if this “making of new relationships” remains separate from our daily lives (both in space and time) it ensures the absolute impossibility of changing the activity and relationships that haunt the corridors of our lived misery: our classrooms, workplaces, streets and homes. Secondly, this centralization of inoperativity within a specific geography allows for the efficient and concentrated efforts of those who take it as their task to manage and re-orient any energy within the space. From the tone of one’s message, to the degree of adhesiveness of one’s

tape, each element within the occupied capitol was subject to an absurd level of micro-management, by the up-and-coming class of activist-managers. Lastly, and perhaps most sinister, is the subjective limitation intrinsic to the participants in the capitol occupation. In viewing the building as “our capitol” and in expressing “this is what democracy looks like,” those captured by the political-symbolic cathexis of the geography of Madison internalized the very structure and limit of the building itself. To physically damage the building, to act out, or to take any material communizing measures would be to do immense damage to the fantasy of democratic legitimacy that animates all activity within the space. The meaning of the building—its mythology of democracy, progress and people-power—attaches itself like a parasite to those who act within it. The Madison line, came to name the most passive and impotent way of acting.

To clarify: in all unfolding events, our sole interest is *the strike*. More specifically, blocking the economy, the cessation of economic roles and the possibility of the immediate communization of the material underpinnings of society. As such, we are immensely excited about those elements of the Wisconsin situation that point to the generalization of tactics of striking (namely: sick-outs, walk-



outs, workplace sabotage). The occupation of the capitol marks a spatial, temporal, tactical and subjective limit to the strike. Our strategic horizon must be to de-center the capitol and to spread the strike beyond all of these limits. Walk-outs at the university, the occupation of the theatre building, the neighborhood assembly, attacks on complicit businesses can all be seen as gestures towards such a spread. As antagonists, our activity must be this spreading.

It is crucial that we elaborate the logic of the strike. This means that beyond the sick-out and walk-out, we need to introduce and draw connections to other forms of economic disruption. Workplace sabotage, jamming of door apparatuses, DDOS attacks, expropriations, sounding of alarms, strategic occupations, barricades of all sorts—taken as a whole, these tactics could point towards a de-limiting of our very conception of a strike. In a world where we are increasingly marginalized, we need to teach one another new ways of experimenting with the power of the excluded to make this all stop.

## Criticize, Intensify

As a minority with a specifically articulated desire to destroy capitalism, we have two unique sets of skills to contribute to these situations. Based on our experience and our eclectic interests, we can offer the gifts of critique and of tactical escalation. The limits to the situation are endless: Democracy, Unionism, Non-Violence, Family Values, Whiteness, Policing, Representation. It might be

more accurate to describe the situation itself as a limit. Our engagement with such a fundamentally limited situation must be to consistently expose each of these ideological or tactical hindrances and to develop a strategy that points beyond them. This exposition reveals the only potential to supersede the various and interlocking constraints on our activity. In exposing, we need to push against, and in our pushing against we need to demystify. Criticize, intensify, rinse, repeat—such repetition builds the reflex and muscle memory of an insurrectional practice.

## Stay Hidden

If the situation itself is not necessarily a revolutionary one, it offers us the rare advantage of cover, of space to act within. Put another way, the situation functions as a storm cloud blanketing the social terrain. From within this storm, our activity takes the form of lightning, which strikes can strike from anywhere, yet points back to nowhere in particular. In such a cacophony of movement, we have the unique opportunity to speak and act wildly, while remaining relatively anonymous. This anonymity is key. In refusing to be labeled or delegated as the anarchists, we can undo the categorization of antagonism as the activity that belongs to us, and us alone. If we can cease to be marked as the other, or more correctly, can disguise our otherness within the unfolding chaos we have the change to infuse the situation with our antagonistic disposition. Within these situations this means abandoning the roles of Anarchists and Communists, in favor of the being

secret agents of anarchy and communization. We must consistently strive to sabotage the bifurcating roles of spectator and specialist. When an attack is anonymous and rage is general, anyone can see such gestures as something of which they themselves are capable. In this way, a marginal set of ethics can emerge as a virus from within the center itself.

## Move Faster Than Our Enemies

Nothing of interest happens because of the situation. Everything of interest happens in spite of it. Every escalation is a result of uncontrollable elements moving faster than those who would control them. Wild cat striking happens when the rank and file acts despite the pleas of bureaucrats. The occupation of the Theatre building happened simply because those who wanted to take it left the activist-managers alone at their stage and moved inside without them. When people stormed the capitol after the passage of the bill, they did so because they ran past the literal and self-appointed police in order to bust through the doors and climb through broken windows. In each of these situations, the wild ones outmaneuvered and outran those who were interested in order. Likewise, when the managers of each situation finally caught up, they immediately set about trying to restore the situation to order. They told the strikers to return to work. They tried to institute strict rules at the Theatre and turned names over to the administration. They literally told people to leave the capitol and go home

amidst chants of “general strike” and “occupy.” If we want to leave these people in the dustbin of history it is imperative that we recognize our agility as our greatest strength, and that we be constantly moving faster and one step ahead of their management.

## Draw Lines, Expose Positions

The greatest failure of the situation in Wisconsin is the general malaise and confusion surrounding the positions of all those involved. In perhaps one of the most efficient examples of of this neutralization, by simply assuring everyone “We’re on your side!” the police were able to entirely control a situation and diffuse the form of policing through the entire body of the capitol occupation. In similar fashion, Democrats and union bureaucrats were able to capture the rage of the situation and ensure it didn’t express itself against the class society that they work to maintain. People found themselves fighting for the politicians who were the architects of their exploitation. Workers took directives from union officials, who only the week before had been entirely willing to sell out the interests of all their constituents to maintain their bureaucracy jobs. Students accepted the management and dictates of activists who had done everything in their power to prevent the very situation from happening. In each of these, antagonists were tricked and controlled by their class-enemies, through a rather simple process of mystification.

# We must find ways of acting that continue to resonate throughout the state, but that force our enemies to pro

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We must view the possibility of an entire crowd of people chanting “thank you, cops!” as the police surround and prepare to arrest them as the most horrifying situation imaginable. Such sympathy with objective enemies perfectly articulates the need to strategically draw lines and to expose positions. The firework demo against the jail, the maneuvering against the activist-managers in the Theatre, and the escalation of attacks against banks and workplaces must be seen as contributions toward this intention. We must find ways of acting that continue to resonate with the enraged throughout the state, but that force our enemies to prove themselves as such. When several buildings were sabotaged through the UW-M campus, janitors and students expressed much affinity with the vandalism (some even refusing to repair the broken locks, as their jobs required). Meanwhile, professional activists, campus police and politicians-in-training all immediately denounced the sabotage. When banks were vandalized the police denounced the attacks, and yet no similar denunciations were echoed by the mass of workers who hated the banks. When union officials first tried to control and later denounced the occupation on the campus, it revealed the intentions of the union leadership to everyone involved. When Maoist activist-managers were exposed as manipulative ideologues and party hacks, they lost the support of those who had complacently followed them for years. In each case, the positions of participants were revealed and everyone had to pick sides. We must ensure that we are the ones setting down the lines, so that the results of each choosing sides is desirable for our intentions.

Austerity offers us a unique opportunity, wherein the state and its agents serve the sole role of being the brutal enforcers of the economic order. When the state is reduced to pure policing, without any auspices of care, it is our job to ensure that anti-austerity struggle escalates to the point that the police must expose themselves. Only at this point is it possible for anti-austerity struggle to become anti-state struggle. We need to ensure each unfolding struggle reaches this point.

## Use The Managers Tools Against The Managers House

Throughout the events in Wisconsin, one of our greatest accomplishments was the total political and social assault we waged on the self described “most advanced” of the activist leadership. It is important that we not become moralistic in our opposition to their management. We are against the managers because of their intentions and their allegiance to the social order, not because of their tactics and their forms. If we can be more efficient in deploying their tools, we should not hesitate to do so. We can facilitate and direct consensus meetings, use identity politics to undermine our enemies, position ourselves strategically around meetings, have our own meetings to scheme their demise, make their own rules work against them, steal their megaphones, use their sound systems, be manipulative in order to expose their own manipulation. We can use our friendships and complicities against their positions. The social nature of our combat means that we shouldn’t shy

with the enraged  
ve themselves as such.

away from rumor, gossip, shit talk and defamation in defeating those who are the enemies of conflict. War is politics by other means and in it we should know no monsters. When the activist-managers fled the occupation in tears and promised to never come back, we can only dream that their words prove true.

## Frame Questions, Shape Discourse

Another successful set of experiments is the way in which we acted to subvert the mainstream discourse and to impose our own discourse in its place. Intensive deployment of propaganda made it so that “strike, occupy, takeover” became the default phraseology when things were at their most tense. The distribution of communiqués from previous occupations and strikes informed the language and practice of an entirely new set of actors. Though a general strike never came to fruition, thousands of people began to think of and prepare for one, as if it was actually possible. Appeals from comrades around the world, could be used to add ethical weight to radical sentiments. Calling for assemblies to specifically answer the questions of how to prepare for a strike, put the strike on the horizon for all who hear the call. Any successful debater will tell you that whoever poses the terms of the debate wins. We need to consistently be posing such terms if we want to ever garner desirable results.

## Recognize Potential In All Relationships

The most beautiful elements of these situations are the ways in which old relationships are infused with new definition and hidden potentials are revealed. Friends, co-workers, neighbors and classmates all become potential conspirators in the course of the struggle. Our friendships become animated by a new urgency, a sense of shared complicity in the desire to push the situation beyond its limits. The streets we walk down every day are enchanted and decorated with an entire new set of narratives and discourses. At the coffee shops where we sit every afternoon, we can hear the same rage on the tongues of people at every table within earshot. Those who previously we could only relate to through economic logic, now have much to teach us and much to learn from us about how we might destroy that very logic. New friends and comrades will reveal themselves. More importantly, we need to be attentive in order to map the new terrains of affinity that exist outside of unions and activist organizations. A new type of party can only emerge out of such a network of affinity and shared dispositions. Going back to the old ways of relating is the greatest possible defeat.

## Just Do The Damn Thing

While the urge to be cautious might be strong, never buy into it. There is nothing to lose. The situation is already a loss. We simply need to do what we all know needs to be done. Restraint is always just the expression of an internal limit.

Throughout the entire situation, there wasn't a single measure of escalation that wasn't met with approval by the vast majority of participants in the situation. Everyone wanted to see things go further, and yet everyone wanted to wait—anarchists included. Hesitation is weakness and shows a lack of imagination. In a world where everyone is waiting, ceasing to wait means everything. In the future, it is imperative that we trust our intuitions and be animated by them.

## Drop The Dead Weight Of Old Forms

In the situation, spectacular and symbolic forms proved themselves to be dead ends. Rallies, speeches, meetings. Each of these sucked the momentum out of the situation and left behind a bloated corpse. We need to avoid these situations at all costs. When we cannot, we need to find ways to subvert their purpose and force everyone to flee them. It's important to be attentive to the ways that such control and stagnancy shifts. A tactic that was radical a month ago can be drained of all potential tomorrow. One need only look so far as the capitol occupation to see the rapidly encroaching limitations to that set of tactics. Where in California, occupation was a threat to the university system: it is now the go-to tactic of the most bland activists around the country. We need to be continually moving and experimenting so as to not be trapped by the repetition of failed forms. We don't have any adequate formulas. As we are faced with new and uncertain situations, we need to be prepared to learn from the past, but also to deploy new and untried strategies.

## Know How To Measure Our Gains

In a situation where we have no interest in the popular stated goals (unions, democracy, whatever), we need to be able to set our own objectives and measure our own accomplishments. Re-call elections, large rallies, union membership, political capital have nothing to do with our project, and as such we need a new rubric by which to measure our activity. We have a great deal to gain in these situations, so long as we know what to strive for. If we can enter the fray knowing what we want out of it, we will be all the better equipped to realize our desires. Spreading chaos, strengthened relationships, new comrades, wide-spread disillusionment, the dethroning of activist-leaders, new narratives of revolt, material destruction, fleeing from our predicates, finding one another, being better prepared to provide for ourselves and determine our lives—these are the hallmarks of successful participation and intervention into crises. Those who have unspeakable intentions must find real ways of speaking to each other about what we have actually accomplished.



## Plan C: If All Else Fails...

... steal as much as humanly possible. If our efforts to push a situation are defeated in all the imaginable ways, we need to have exit strategies that ensure we are more materially prepared going into the next set of events. When students speak of occupations, make sure they occupy places with print resources, building supplies, electronic equipment. When enthusiastic new participants begin talking about doing economic damage to companies that supported the bill, suggest that they begin with looting the complicit grocery stores. If enemy groups have funding from their political parties, be sure to divert as much funding as possible. Sound-systems, money, food, propaganda, computers, fly new gear: *stack everything!*





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FROM THOUGHTS ON THE  
APPARATUS OF VIOLENCE  
AND SOME MISUSES OF  
FOUCAULT

No one should have been surprised at the Left's overwhelming grip on the Wisconsin protests, nor the willingness of so many citizens to attach themselves to its image of peaceful, middle-class discontent. This predictable element of struggle does not, in any way, cancel out the magic found in thousands of people abruptly leaving their jobs, coming together, and sharing a sense of distrust towards the government.